

Congressman

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Jobs Meeting with President Obama

Last week I joined member of the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the need to focus efforts on creating jobs, especially for the chronically unemployed.

It was an open and honest conversation that focused on the staggering unemployment rates throughout the country. Among the 23 counties in North Carolina's First District, the unemployment rate is 12.9%. And, only 4 of the 23 counties have unemployment rates below 10%.

President Obama and my fellow CBC members agreed on a number of things that could be done to address the unemployment problem, both immediately and in the long run.

We urged the President to continue to work with us to ensure that efforts to create jobs and reduce unemployment target high areas of poverty, unemployment and the chronically unemployed. We also expressed strong support for summer jobs for young people.

We look forward to working with President Obama, House and Senate leadership and our community partners to build and implement policies that will build and strengthen our economy for all Americans.

2010 Census

The House unanimously agreed on a bill aimed at preventing U.S. Census look-alike mailings.

Recently, Americans have received envelopes marked 'Census' and 'official document,' when the papers inside are nothing of the kind—and sometimes even political fundraising appeals.

Groups that send out such mailings are seeking to take advantage of the Census to unfairly promote their own interests. And even worse, they are interfering with a fair and accurate Census by possibly depressing the response.

The Prevent Deceptive Census Look Alike Mailings Act would require any mailing with an envelope marked 'Census' to clearly indicate the sender, reducing the possibility of deception; it would also trigger an existing legal requirement that the mailing include a disclaimer stating that it is not affiliated with the U.S. Census.

This bill won't prevent any organization from using the word 'Census'—but it will stop private organizations from disguising themselves as the federal government.

People should review all mailings carefully to ensure that they are indeed from the Census Bureau. Official Census Bureau documents will never ask for your full social security number, money or a donation, PIN codes, passwords or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.

Also, the Census Bureau never sends requests on behalf of a political party. If residents are

suspicious of a mailing, they can contact my office, the Census Bureau or the Postmaster General's office.

The 2010 Census is one of the shortest in U.S. history, consisting of only ten questions. The Census is conducted every ten years and consists of questions about the number of people living in your home and some demographic information about them.

The results of the Census will determine how more than \$445 billion in federal funds – for everything from schools to roads to senior centers – are distributed to state, local, and tribal governments over the next decade. It also affects representation in Congress and the Electoral College.

Our community can't afford to lose out on crucial federal funds and programs. In order to get our fair share of funding for our community, we must count everyone. Our schools, libraries, community centers and so many other important programs all rely on Census results.

According to a recent study, areas most affected by Census undercounting lose about \$2,913 per uncounted person in federal funding.

For additional information about the Census, please visit <http://2010.census.gov>.

Health Insurance Reform

Congress continues making steady progress on health insurance reform.

There is growing hope that Congress will soon have a final bill that puts American families and small business owners – not insurance companies – in control of their own health care; makes insurance more affordable for the middle-class; and, reduces the deficit through numerous measures including reining in waste, fraud and abuse.

The final bill will incorporate the best ideas from legislation that has already passed the House and the Senate, as well as new ones from both Democrats and Republicans.

There has been a long, deliberative and purposeful process in developing this critically important legislation. The House has held about 100 hearings on health care since 2007, and House members have met with constituents at some 3,000 health care events across the country. Additionally, three House committees have spent more than 160 hours on hearings and markups of health care legislation.

If we fail to control health care costs, families will continue to be increasingly burdened with higher premiums; businesses will be forced to drop coverage or lay off workers; and, our national and state budgets will be fiscally unsustainable.

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